



## EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE

### Feedback Form for Commission Meeting

**Date of Meeting:** August 9, 2012 – 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

**In Attendance:** Sandra Spangler, Eli Ramos, Mabel Hernandez-Saienni

**Absent:** Lourdes Puig, Maria Matos, Terri Richard, Jim Lesko

#### **Broad Issues Identified/Discussed:**

Parent Information Center (PIC) presentation by Marie-Anne Aghadazian, Executive Director

What is PIC doing with Delaware parents, specifically Hispanic parents, in the areas of parenting, literacy skills, and helping parents communicate with their children's schools?

#### **Specific Issues Identified/Discussed**

- PIC is a non-profit organization that has been in existence since 1985. It is funded through federal special ed. funds, grants and foundations. They receive support for the services they offer through the National Parent Technical Assistance Center, as well as DOE representatives.
- PIC offices are located in Georgetown (13 Bridgeville Rd.) and Wilmington (6 Larch Ave., Suite 404). There is also a "PIC Stop" in Dover at 100 Enterprise Place, Ste 1 which can be used for meetings.
- PIC's mission is to improve the educational and developmental outcomes for all children, especially for children with disabilities, by providing information, education, and support to their families.
- As PIC is partially funded from federal IDEA funds, a great deal of their work focuses on helping parents understand special education law and best instructional practices, as well as provide support for one another. Professional development for parents is free of charge.
- PIC provides educational surrogate parents to represent students without parents during IEP meetings. There is a need for bilingual surrogates. There is also a need for all

state special ed. documents to be available in Spanish. Currently Procedural Safeguards are available in Spanish but the actual IEP document is not. Marie-Anne plans to work with new DOE Director of Exceptional Children Resources, Mary Ann Mieczkowski, on this.

- Marie-Anne stated that currently they are working with many immigrant parents and low income families who have limited access to support and resources.
- PIC Communication – Some of PIC's print literature is printed in Spanish; however, there is a need for more documents to be translated. When asked, Marie-Anne stated that there is a need for bilingual staff at the Wilmington office. Recent staff resignations and limited funding has impacted PIC's ability to provide these services. PIC will have a table at the Hispanic Festival in Millsboro.
- PIC has a new two year grant from the Center for Disabilities Studies to assist children who transfer from the Child Development Watch (infant toddler program through DHHS) to preschools. The focus of this grant is to ensure that students succeed and parents are assisted in this endeavor. Assistance takes many forms (medical services, parental literacy, and transportation); therefore, the Hispanic Commission Committees/Chairs were shared with Marie-Anne to make future contact.
- When asked how the Education Subcommittee could assist PIC, Marie Anne responded that most importantly, she needs parents referred to PIC so services and support can be provided.
- Marie-Anne (or a PIC staff member) was invited to join the Education Subcommittee as a non-commission member.

### **Action Steps to Achieve Additional Information**

1. The Ed. Subcommittee will meet again on Thursday, October 25, 2012 and Wednesday, December 12, 2012 from 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. at the new Capital School District Administration Building, located at 198 Commerce Way, Dover, DE 19904. We are still trying to make teleconferencing available.
2. Education Subcommittee members feel that the greatest impact can be made at the early childhood level, assisting preschool aged children and their parents with literacy, parenting and educational issues. However, we will continue to work with our non-commission partner and DOE staff member, Terry Richard to assist school age children and their families in any way that we can.
3. We hope for full committee attendance at our October 25<sup>th</sup> meeting in order to move forth. We'd also like to get more information from Terry Richard regarding services to migrant children and their families in Delaware.